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3 April 2018

Ms Cindy Ho
The Legislative Council Complex
1 Legislative Council Road
Central
Hong Kong

(By E-mail and Fax : 2521 7518)

Dear Ms Ho,

Panel on Environmental Affairs
Letter from the Hon. Hui Chi-fung

Thank you for the letter dated 4 January 2018 from the Secretariat. Following the discussions between the Hon. Hui Chi-fung, Environment Bureau (ENB) and the Environmental Protection Department (EPD), I am authorized to reply as follows.

In February 2014, the ENB promulgated A Food Waste and Yard Waste Plan for Hong Kong 2014-2022 (the Plan), which sets out the Government's strategies to deal with organic waste. The strategies cover collecting data collection, promoting waste reduction at source, encouraging separation and collection as well as exploring the most suitable means to treat the unavoidable waste. An inter-departmental working group chaired by the ENB has been set up to co-ordinate the work of the government departments in implementing the Plan, including enhancing data collection and promoting best practices.

Various government bureaux and departments have rendered support to the Plan. For example, the Greening, Landscape and Tree Management Section of the Development Bureau published the "Guidelines on Yard Waste Reduction and Treatment" (the Guidelines) in July 2014, which provides general reference for government departments relating to measures on yard waste reduction at various

stages from landscape design to maintenance. Government departments have been following the Guidelines to implement various measures to reduce yard waste (including withered and broken tree branches and leaves) as much as practicable according to the principles of reduction, reuse and recycling, with a view to reducing disposal at landfills. With the exception of plants infested by pests, diseases or invasive species, yard waste would be treated according to its nature by appropriate means, including natural degradation, composting, mulching, fuel production and reusing as recreational facilities or decoration.

In addition, the Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department has adopted the best practice available to treat yard waste on site as far as possible, including stockpiling on site to provide niches for wildlife and release nutrients to nature when they decompose. Tree logs suitable for reuse would be used for making furniture or decorative materials for the recreational facilities in country parks, such as animated features, waymarks, and benches, etc. Yard waste from the Leisure and Cultural Services Department (LCSD) would be delivered to the Animal Waste Composting Plant in Ngau Tam Mei and the Kowloon Bay Waste Recycling Centre for composting. Since 2014, the LCSD has started to produce compost on-site from yard waste using garden composters at suitable venues. The LCSD will gradually replace the planting of annuals by shrubs or perennials with colourful foliage, with a view to reducing yard waste at source. In the longer term, the LCSD will specify in the Schedule of Accommodation of suitable new venues the requirement for installation of on-site composting facilities. The Civil Engineering and Development Department's greening works relating to infrastructural development, works of slope stabilisation and greening master plan would focus on planting of perennials suitable for local environment, with the right vegetation in the right place and choose native perennials to encourage local ecological growth and reduce plant replacement in order to reduce yard waste.

In addition, the LCSD and the EPD have been working closely together to actively implement a number of environmentally-friendly waste reduction measures at the Hong Kong Flower Show 2018. The major measures to promote reduction of yard waste include : (1) relocating the landscape displays of the 18 districts Garden Plot Competition and the large-scale floral arrangements to all districts recreation venues for public viewing; (2) Through the "Give the Flowers a New Home!" of the Jockey Club Flower Replanting Scheme, re-plantable flowers would be given to schools, registered groups and non-governmental organisations for further planting. For the first time, the organiser has distributed 5,000 pots of re-plantable dahlia to the public, and more than 30,000 potted plants in total had been sent to organisations and the

public for further planting to give greenery to the community; (3) The wilted flowers had been delivered to EPD's Animal Waste Composting Plant in Ngau Tam Mei for making compost and fertilizer.

The Government will continue to implement the Plan and appeal to the various stakeholders for support to reduce yard waste on multiple fronts, including reducing the use of decorative plants during festive events, replanting, promoting better landscape design and pursuing suitable policies to promote natural degradation, composting, anaerobic digestion, reuse and recycling etc.

As regards our efforts to promote the recycling of yard waste after Christmas and Lunar New Year, since 2016, the EPD has followed the prevailing government procurement procedures to engage a qualified contractor with relevant experience and capability to provide services for collection, delivery and recycling of Natural Christmas Trees (NCTs) and Peach Blossom Trees (PBTs). For the 2016 NCTs and 2017 PBTs recycling programmes, the contractor has accomplished the major requirements of the contract, including properly recycling and converting the collected NCTs (22.7 tonnes) and PBTs (34.7 tonnes) into compost, bulking agents, wood pellets and other useful materials. The processed materials and end products have been donated for use by education, social and charity organisations, as well as agricultural organisations. To promote the 2017 NCTs recycling programme, the EPD has engaged a qualified contractor through the prevailing government procurement procedures to provide NCTs recycling service for members of the public from January 5 to 7. The number of designated collection points increased from previous one to eight. The tendering process for the PBTs, bamboos and wooden pallets recycling program in 2018 has been completed. The EPD also commissioned the contractor to provide the related services in January 2018. The EPD will continue to closely monitor the contractor's progress and ensure that the work of the contractor fully complies with the contract requirements. The EPD welcomes other organisations and associations to provide recycling services for NCTs to facilitate the public and the Commercial and Industrial sector to participate in and promote waste reduction.

Yours sincerely,



(Vivian CHAN)

for Secretary for the Environment